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## Candrakīrti and the Pūrvaśailas: A Note on *Triśaraṇasaptati* v. 51

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“Seventy Verses on the Three Refuges” (*Triśaraṇasaptati*, *Gsum la skyabs su 'gro ba bdun cu pa*) is a verse composition by Candrakīrti (600–650).<sup>1</sup> It survives only in a Tibetan translation done by Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna (Atiśa, 980–1054) and Rin chen bzang po (958–1055), which has been critically edited and translated into English by Per Sørensen.<sup>2</sup>

Although Sørensen’s convenient edition and translation have been available for more than twenty years, the *Triśaraṇasaptati* does not seem to be well known to modern scholarship on Buddhism. There is sufficient evidence, however, to maintain that this short treatise by Candrakīrti was considered authoritative by Indian scholars like Atiśa and Abhayākara Gupta (late eleventh century to early twelfth century),<sup>3</sup> and by Tibetan scholars from Rin chen bzang po to Tsong kha pa Blo bzang grags pa (1357–1419)<sup>4</sup> to ‘Jam mgon Kong sprul Blo gros mtha’ yas (1813–1899)<sup>5</sup> to the present.

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<sup>1</sup> The Sanskrit at the beginning of all versions consulted is *Tri-śaraṇa-saptati* (in a few cases *-saraṇa-* rather than *-śaraṇa-*). Cordier, whose catalogue is based on a Peking xylograph, the “red edition” in the National Library, Paris, gives *Triśaraṇa[-gamana]-saptati*: see Palmyr Cordier, *Catalogue du fonds tibétain de la Bibliothèque Nationale. Troisième partie, Index du Bstan-ḥgyur (tibétain 180–332)*, Paris: Imprimerie Nationale/Ernest Leroux, 1915, XXXII, 9 (p. 333); XXXIII, 101 (p. 360). For the first, he notes that the original text reads °*śaraṇasaptati*, while the “Index de Saint-Petersbourg” (not available to us) gives °*saraṇasaptati*; for the second he notes that both the original and the “Index de Saint-Petersbourg” read °*saraṇasaptatika*, for which he suggests a corrected form °*śaraṇa[gamana]sāptatika* (with a question mark). Modern catalogues like those of D and P also give *Triśaraṇa[-gamana]-saptati*. We assume that Cordier was influenced by the Tibetan title, *Gsum la skyabs su 'gro ba bdun cu pa*, and that later catalogues were influenced by Cordier. The dates are after Leonard W. J. van der Kuijp, “The Earliest Indian Reference to Muslims in a Buddhist Philosophical Text of Circa 700,” *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, vol. 34 (2006), p. 180 (full article, pp. 169–202). Sørensen gives 530–600: Per K. Sørensen (ed., tr.), *Candrakīrti Triśaraṇasaptati, the Septuagint on the Three Refuges*, Vienna: Arbeitskreis für tibetische und buddhistische Studien Universität Wien, 1986 (Wiener Studien zur Tibetologie und Buddhismuskunde Heft 16), p. 7.

<sup>2</sup> See above: dates after Sørensen, p. 8.

<sup>3</sup> Date after Hajime Nakamura, *Indian Buddhism: A Survey with Bibliographical Notes*, Ogura, Hirakata City: Kansai University of Foreign Studies, 1980, p. 335.

<sup>4</sup> Lamrim Chenmo Translation Committee by Tsong-ka-pa (tr.), *The Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment: Lam Rim Chen Mo*, Vol. 1, Ithaca: Snow Lion Publications, pp. 179, 204.

<sup>5</sup> Kong sprul cites verses 56 to 58, which are the key verses on the Pūrvaśaila/Aparaśaila scriptures. See Kong sprul yon tan rgya mtsho, *Shes bya kun khyab*, Beijing: Mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1982, Bar cha, p. 561. For an English translation, see Jamgön Kongtrul Lodrö Tayé, *The Treasury of Knowledge, Book Six*,

Apart from the four verses (33, 45–47) cited in *sāstras* like Haribhadra's (c. eighth century)<sup>6</sup> *Abhisamayālaṅkāralokā Prajñāpāramitāvyākhyā*, the text does not survive in Sanskrit.<sup>7</sup> Verse 33 also occurs – again in connection with refuge – in the *Sphuṭārthā Śrīghanācārasaṅgrahaṭīkā*. This may be significant in terms of Candrakīrti's school affiliation.<sup>8</sup>

In verse 51, Candrakīrti addresses the question of why an arhat should pay homage to a bodhisatva. Sørensen reads the verse as follows:

*shā ri'i lung las dgra bcom pas ||*  
*byang chub sems dpa' phyag byas nyid ||*  
*'di dag dkon mchog gsum gzhan min ||*  
*sangs rgyas khongs su gtogs par 'dod ||*

He records several variants:

**51a** *shā ri'i lung : shar ri'i lung*    **51b** *phyag byas nyid : phyag 'tshal nyid*

A fuller account of the variants is as follows:

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*Part Four: Systems of Buddhist Tantra, The Indestructible Way of Secret Mantra*, tr. by Elio Guarisco and Ingrid McLeod, Ithaca: Snow Lion, 2005, p. 74.

<sup>6</sup> Date after Nakamura (1980), p. 260.

<sup>7</sup> As Sørensen notes, two verses (12, 13) are identical to *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* XV 1, 2; thereby they are not, properly speaking, by Candrakīrti or unique to the work.

<sup>8</sup> Sanghasen Singh (ed., tr.), *A Study of the Sphuṭārthā Śrīghanācārasaṅgrahaṭīkā*, Patna: K.P. Jayaswal Research Institute, 1983 (Tibetan Sanskrit Works Series No. XXIV), p. 50.17; J. Duncan M. Derret (tr.), *A Textbook for Novices: Jayarakṣita's "Perspicuous Commentary on the Compendium of Conduct by Śrīghana"*, Turin: Edizione Jollygrafica (Pubblicazioni di "Indologica Taurensia," Collana di Letture diretta da Oscar Botto XV), p. 19. We will discuss this verse in a forthcoming article. For the school affiliation of the "Perspicuous Commentary," see Giulio Agostini, "On the *Nikāya* Affiliation of the Śrīghanācārasaṅgraha and the Sphuṭārthā Śrīghanācārasaṅgrahaṭīkā," *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 26.1 (2003), pp. 97–114. Agostini concludes (pp. 111–112) that "the available evidence suggests that the author of the *Śrīghanācārasaṅgraha* and Jayarakṣita were not Mahāsāṃghikas, but belonged to a *nikāya* that was related to the Mahāsāṃghikas."

1	<i>shā ri'i lung las dgra bcom pas</i>    <i>byang chub sems dpa' phyag byas nyid</i>	G 3365 <sup>9</sup>	N <sub>1</sub> <sup>10</sup>	P 5366 <sup>11</sup>	
2	<i>shar ri'i lung las dgra bcom pas</i>    <i>byang chub sems dpa' phyag byas nyid</i>	C <sup>12</sup>	TCRC <sup>13</sup>	D 3971 <sup>14</sup>	
3	<i>shar ri'i lung las dgra bcom pas</i>    <i>byang chub sems dpa' phyag 'tshal nyid</i>	G 3477 <sup>15</sup>	N <sub>2</sub> <sup>16</sup>	P 5478 <sup>17</sup>	D 4564 <sup>18</sup>

For the first word, Sørensen has chosen *shā ri'i lung* over *shar ri'i lung*, following N<sub>1</sub> and P 5366. He translates the verse as:

In the scripture (*āgama*) of Śāri[putra] [it is maintained that]  
Arhats [should] pay [their due] respect (*namas kṛta*) to Bodhisatvas;  
[By this gesture] these [Arhats] are not at variance (*ananya*) with the Three Jewels,  
[on the contrary they] are [even] maintained (*mata*) to be included (*antargata*) in the  
Buddha [category].

The citation from Śā ri'i lung, or \*Śāri-āgama, immediately attracts attention. In Śāstra usage, Āgama frequently refers to the texts deemed authoritative by a certain school, rather than one or the other of “the four Āgamas” equivalent to the Pali *Nikāyas*. Here one thinks immediately of Śāriputra and his connection with the Abhidharma. In his note (p. 79), Sørensen refers, with a question mark, to the *Dharmaskandha* of the Sarvāstivādin Abhidharma, held by tradition to have been composed by Śāriputra. One might also wonder: could this be a reference to the Śāriputra Abhidharma? These intriguing questions are, however, based on the choice of the wrong reading, as we will show in this paper.

Another problem is Sørensen's line 51b, *byang chub sems dpa' phyag byas nyid*, which does not really make good sense grammatically. Here Abhayākara Gupta and Gung thang pa III Dkon mchog bstan pa'i sgron me (1762–1823)<sup>19</sup> read *byang chub sems dpar*

<sup>9</sup> Ganden Golden Tanjur, *mdo 'grel, khi*, 386a2.

<sup>10</sup> Narthang Tanjur, *mdo 'grel, khi*, 281b3.

<sup>11</sup> Peking Tanjur, *dbu ma, khi*, 294a1.

<sup>12</sup> Cone Tanjur, *dbu ma, gi*, 263b6.

<sup>13</sup> *Bstan 'gyur dpe bsdur ma*, Beijing: Krung go'i bod rig pa'i dpe skrun khang, Vol. 65, 690.3.

<sup>14</sup> Derge Tanjur, *dbu ma, gi*, 252b6.

<sup>15</sup> Ganden Golden Tanjur, *mdo 'grel, gi*, 295a6–b1.

<sup>16</sup> Narthang Tanjur, *mdo 'grel, gi*, 232b4.

<sup>17</sup> Peking Tanjur, *dbu ma, gi*, 243b7.

<sup>18</sup> Here it is included in the collection of “minor works by Jo bo,” (*Jo bo'i chos chung*), that is, by Atiśa. Since this version is not available to us, we follow Sørensen's readings. Cf. Krung go'i bod brgyud mtho rim nang bstan slob gling bod brgyud nang bstan zhib 'jug khang, *Jo bo'i chos chung brgya rtsa*, Beijing: Mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 2002 (Gang can rig brgya'i sgo 'byed lde mig, no. 30), p. 532.

<sup>19</sup> Date after Dung dkar Blo bzang 'phrin las, *Dung dkar tshig mdzod chen mo*, Beijing: Krung go'i bod

*phyag bya ste* (see below), which makes much better sense: “should pay homage to bodhisatvas” (accusative).

To help us to understand the verse, we may turn to Dkon mchog bstan pa'i sgron me's unfinished work, “Annotations on the First Chapter (*Sarvākārajñatā*) of 'Jam dbyang shes pa's exegesis on the *Prajñāpāramitā*,”<sup>20</sup> which cites and comments on the verse:

*zla ba'i skyabs 'gro bdun cu pa las kyang |*

*shar ri'i lung las dgra bcom gyis |*  
*byang chub sems dpar phyag bya ste ||*  
*de ni dkon mchog gsum gzhan min ||*  
*sangs rgyas khungs su gtogs par 'dod ||*

*ces nyan thos dgra bcom gyis kyang phyag bya bar gsungs pa'i rtags kyis kun rdzob pa'i sangs rgyas su sgrub la | shar ri'i sde pa'i lung ni | bcom ldan 'das byang chub sems dpa' rnam kyis rdzu 'phrul ji lta ba de ltar yang | nyan thos dang rang sangs rgyas rnam kyis yul yang ma lags pas | byang chub sems dpa' la phyag 'tshal lo || zhes abhyas drangs pa de yin nam snyam la | sde pa so so'i lung gis rang rang la byang chub sems dpa' rnam dgra bcom gyis kyang phyag 'os su sgrub snang ba der ltos.*<sup>21</sup>

Furthermore, according to Candra[kīrti]'s *Trisaraṇasaptati*:

The scripture of the Pūrvaśailas asserts  
 That an arhat should pay homage to a bodhisatva  
 Because they [the bodhisatvas] are not something apart from the Three Jewels  
 Since they are included under the “Buddha.”

That is, even a listener who is an arhat should pay homage [to a bodhisatva], because it is established by the word of the Buddha (*gsungs*) that [a bodhisatva] has the distinguishing marks (*rtags*, *liṅga*) of a Buddha at the conventional level (*\*saṃvṛti-buddha*). Abhay[ākara]gupta cites the Āgama of the Pūrvaśailas as follows, “Fortunate One, given that the nature of the magic power of bodhisatvas is beyond the scope of listeners and pratyekabuddhas, they [listeners and pratyekabuddhas] should pay homage to bodhisatvas” – it is apparent that the Āgamas of each of the schools (*nikāyas*) establish that it is appropriate for arhats to pay homage to bodhisatvas – please heed this [citation]!<sup>22</sup>

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rig pa dpe skrun khang, 2002, pp. 510–512.

<sup>20</sup> Dkon mchog bstan pa'i sgron me, “Phar phyin skabs dang po'i mtha' dpyod kyis mchan 'grel rtsom 'phro,” *Dkon mchog bstan pa'i sgron me'i gsung 'bum*, Lhasa: Zhol par ma, 2000. TBRC W22112. 2, 7–226.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid. 98b4–99a1.

<sup>22</sup> For a similar citation from the *Bodhisatva-piṭaka* of the Pūrvaśailas, spoken, however, to Mahākāśyapa, see Malcolm David Eckel, *Bhāviveka and his Buddhist Opponents*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press (Harvard Oriental Series 70), 2009, p. 349–350 (D 176b) (translation pp. 167–168).

Dkon mchog bstan pa'i sgron me's version differs in lines *a* and *b* from the *Triśaraṇasaptati* of the Tanjur. There are further differences in Abhayākara Gupta's *Munimatālaṅkāra*,<sup>23</sup> which gives us an alternate translation of verse 51, as well as more context:<sup>24</sup>

shar ri'i lung las dgra bcom gyis ||  
 byang chub sems dpa' phyag bya ste ||  
 dkon mchog gsum las phyi rol min ||  
 sangs rgyas nang du 'dus par dgongs ||<sup>25</sup>

...de nas yang gnas brtan rab 'byor gyis bcom ldan 'das la 'di skad ces gsol to || bcom ldan 'das byang chub sems dpa' rnam kyī rdzu 'phrul ji lta ba de lta yang nyan thos dang rang sangs rgyas rnam kyī yul yang ma lags pas byang chub sems dpa' la phyag 'tshal lo zhes shar gyi ri la gnas pa'i byang chub sems dpa'i sde snod du'o.<sup>26</sup>

[It is stated in] the *Bodhisatva-piṭaka* of the Pūrvaśailas: "Then, Sthavira Subhūti addressed the Fortunate One: Fortunate One, given that the nature of the magic power of bodhisatvas is beyond the scope of listeners and pratyekabuddhas, they [listeners and pratyekabuddhas] should pay homage to the bodhisatvas."

The *Bodhisatva-piṭaka* is one of the seven *piṭakas* of the Pūrvaśailas and Aparāśailas listed by Candrakīrti in *Triśaraṇasaptati* verses 57–59.

Reading verse 51 as cited in Dkon mchog bstan pa'i sgron me and the *Munimatālaṅkāra* citation, and taking into account the variants listed above, we can propose a revised reading of *Triśaraṇasaptati*:

<i>Munimatālaṅkāra</i>	<i>Triśaraṇasaptati</i>
shar ri'i lung las dgra bcom gyis    byang chub sems dpa' phyag bya ste    dkon mchog gsum las phyi rol min    sangs rgyas nang du 'dus par dgongs	shar ri'i lung las dgra bcom pas    byang chub sems dpa' phyag 'tshal nyid    'di dag dkon mchog gsum gzhan min    sangs rgyas khongs su gtogs par 'dod
Dkon mchog bstan pa'i sgron me	
shar ri'i lung las dgra bcom gyis   byang chub sems dpa' phyag bya ste    de ni dkon mchog gsum gzhan min    sangs rgyas khongs su gtogs par 'dod	

<sup>23</sup> D 3903, *dbu ma*, a, 73b1–293a7.

<sup>24</sup> Apart from verse 51 in question, Abhayākara Gupta also cites verses 1, 34, 54, 55, 67.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid. 82b1.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid. 84a2–3.

Here Shar ri'i lung indicates the Āgama of Pūrvaśaila school, and the verse may now be rendered as:

The scripture of the Pūrvaśailas asserts  
That an arhat should pay homage to a bodhisatva  
Because they [the bodhisatvas] are not outside of the Three Jewels  
Since they are included under the “Buddha.”

The verse is yet another testimony to perennial debate in the Buddhist schools, discussed by Bhavya and others: whether an arhat should pay homage to a bodhisatva.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> See Peter Skilling, “A Citation from the \**Buddhavaṃsa* of the Abhayagiri School,” *Journal of the Pali Text Society* XVIII (1993), pp. 165–175; “Citations from the Scriptures of the ‘Eighteen Schools’ in the Tarkajvālā,” in Petra Kieffer-Pülz and Jens-Uwe Hartmann (eds.), *Bauddhavidyāsudhākaraḥ: Studies in Honour of Heinz Bechert on the Occasion of his 65th Birthday*, Swisttal-Odendorf, 1997 (*Indica et Tibetica* 30), pp. 605–614. See also Eckel, (2009) pp. 164–173.